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EIN/18-72-0696

28 August 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Bronson Tweedy

FROM : John Huizenga

SUBJECT : Involvement of NSCIC Working Group  
in the NIE Program

As I told you some weeks ago, I think that your proposals to involve the NSCIC and its Working Group in the NIE program are for the most part ill-advised. In this memorandum I give in summary form my reasons for taking this view. We can talk it over at greater length if you like.

Submission of proposed NIE quarterly schedules to NSCIC Members  
for approval and/or comment

1. The authority of B/NE to propose and USIB to approve these programs should not be shared or diluted. The present arrangement embodies the principle of separateness and independence of intelligence components in relation to policy-making organs, a principle stressed as basic throughout the Community's history.

2. And this is no mere academic principle. Cases have arisen in which policy-making offices bring pressure to have items removed from the program for parochial self-interested reasons. This is manageable when the attempt is made through the departmental intelligence unit with which we normally deal. It would be awkward and embarrassing to the DCI and USIB if they faced the non-concurrence of "top level officials from outside the intelligence community" on program items. Intelligence must be free to produce what it thinks is useful and needed. This is especially true if one takes into account the role that intelligence can play in anticipating future needs, something policy elements in their preoccupation with day-to-day action seldom do.

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3. We have now and have always had "a channel for requests from NSCIC principals." This exists in the opportunity which USIB agencies have, and which they regularly utilize, to transmit proposals on behalf of their policy superiors during deliberations on the program with BNE, or for that matter at any other time. As for the NSC Staff, ONE has for a number of years transmitted draft programs for comment.

4. It is not invariably true in bureaucracies that creating "a formal mechanism" is the best way to get the job done. In this matter, such a mechanism promises to be cumbersome as well as unnecessary. Moreover, as suggested above, informal and indirect negotiation has a particular merit in respect of this business since it helps to preserve the independence of BNE and the USIB agencies themselves.

5. It is important especially that BNE, which is responsible for taking the lead in designing the program and shaping the NIE product, be buffered from direct pressures of policy users. This consideration applies not only to choice of topics but even more to formulation of TR's discussed below.

Participation by representatives of appropriate consumer organizations in the review of NIE and SNIE terms of reference, on invitation of D/NE

6. As formulated, this proposal is almost an exact description of what happens now. In cases in which a request is received from a policy unit we invariably negotiate the terms of reference with the people concerned in order to define as precisely as possible what is wanted. On items which we program ourselves we often seek counsel informally from putative consumers.

7. In negotiations to refine terms of reference normally we find it tactful and efficient to involve the intelligence component of the prime consumer, sometimes as go-between. When the requester is a non-USIB agency we go directly to that agency and have never had

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any difficulty in doing so. On occasion, such people have been invited to participate in meetings of USIB representatives to refine terms of reference.

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8. The suggestion to involve policy elements formally in both of the above procedures appears to spring from a notion that they have not been getting the coverage or treatment of topics which they desire. I know of no persuasive evidence for this. Naturally, there is a built-in and chronic problem of user dissatisfaction which we all have to live with and respond to when we can. If there is any special problem beyond this currently, I suspect that it lies with consumer utilization of intelligence product rather than with the scope and adequacy of the product itself. This is a matter to which the Working Group might well turn its attention, say, for a start, by soliciting reports from its consumer participants on just how they do use intelligence.

#### Systematic Evaluation of NIEs and SNIEs

9. I have no objection in principle to the use of a consumer evaluation questionnaire for estimates. I do not think that the Chairman of the NSCIC Working Group, rather than O/NE itself, should be the sponsor. And I think the procedure proposed would shortly become routinized, that responses would be irregular and left to clerks. It is only realistic to recognize that there would be little chance of getting "valuable inputs" from "top level officials" by this method. (The appeal to the DCI's letter in 1969 about military estimates as a precedent is misplaced, and in any case the responses on that occasion were only one factor in the revisions of format undertaken.)

10. A far more useful procedure, it seems to me, would be to arrange face-to-face contacts, usually between high level consumers and two O/NE Board and Staff people responsible for a particular estimate or area of estimating, to solicit comment and suggestions directly. This could be done on selected issuances or topics of major importance from time to time and would probably provide considerable two-way benefits.

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**Remarks:**

*Here it is! We should discuss.*

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